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Volume 23

Number 8 *The Iowa Homemaker* vol.23, no.8

Article 9

1943

Forecast Clothing Prospects

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Recommended Citation

Watt, Dorothy (1943) "Forecast Clothing Prospects," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 23 : No. 8 , Article 9.

Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol23/iss8/9>

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Forecast

Clothing Prospects

Dorothy Watt discusses the results of government stockpiling in relation to wise buying

THE problem of clothing as well as feeding the European masses will come with the ultimate collapse of the opposing armies in today's epic struggle. Outside of the German-speaking areas alone, there are approximately 150 million people who are depending on us for clothing supplies of which they have been deprived for the last several years.

Extension clothing specialists at Iowa State point out that we must face this problem immediately. Surplus production towards this end has been at a small rate. Huge stockpiling of resources by the American people is thought to be the immediate means to the end.

Spring and summer buying, then, must be at a minimum. Trends in fabrics and styles point to saving wherever possible, but the real solution comes in buying only essentials. Leather for shoe soling has dropped 25 percent, though more vinyl plastic soles are being produced.

Adult underwear production is 20 percent under civilian requirements. The industry is losing its labor at the rate of 10 percent per month, and new workers take weeks to train. Demands of service men,

which are for 12 suits of underwear per year per soldier, must be filled until the war is won.

Elastic supplies such as foundation garments and some types of underwear will be supplemented by synthetic rubber. There is no certainty as to the wearing qualities of these synthetic rubber products and attention must be paid to instructions for use and care.

Linings, blouses, lingerie and wash dress material will become increasingly unavailable as production of rayon cord is diverted to tires. Rayons must also be supplied to the United Nations, as they are no longer produced in Europe. What supplies are available are not well labeled and must be treated carefully. Rayon jerseys are increasingly popular.

Unlined suits will appear more as a result. There will be less yardage in dresses, shorter sleeves and jackets, lower necklines and narrower skirts.

Cottons and rayons will require shrinking before being made into garments, unless they bear specific shrinkage labels. Special care must be given ready-to-wear garments, too, for the same reason. Weaves are plain and simple, to facilitate a larger output in a shorter time.

Acetate rayon hose for women will be made 1½ inches longer in the leg because of lack of stretching qualities compared to viscose and cupramonium hose. This means that they will come in 30½ inch lengths, compared to 29 inches for other stockings.

A new order on hosiery, effective among retailers April 16, states that inserts may continue to be used instead of permanent markings until July 15. The insert will give the ceiling price, trademark, gauge and other valuable consumer information.

A dollar and cents ceiling was placed on rayon knitwear, February 9. This action may mean a lowering of price in some lines, improvement in quality and more availability of knitwear.

Stockpiling for future needs, 10 percent of each mill's total production of a cotton fabric must be set aside for lend lease. However, the new cotton balloon cloth made from the best quality cotton fiber has a high fashion appeal and will replace cotton shortages to a certain extent.

Home sewers will construct patterns using less yardage to aid in collecting resources for the government post-war clothing problem

